

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 164354
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:IO:MESWOPE

APPROVED BY:IO:MESWOPE

AF:KSMITH (SUB)

S/S-ORPERITO

-----062523 150600Z /13

R 142040Z JUL 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 164354

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEA LUSAKA 1979 ACTION SECSTATE INFO DAR ES SALAAM
GABORONE LAGOS LONDON MAPUTO PRETORIA 12 JUL 77

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1979

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK

SUBJ: NKOMO SEEKS TO CLARIFY PATRIOTIC FRONT STAND ON
ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE

REF: LUSAKA 1961 (NOTAL), STATE 160853 (NOTAL),
PRETORIA 3345 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH CHARGE AND EMBOFF JULY 12, NKOMO SOUGHT
TO CLARIFY PATRIOTIC FRONT'S POSITION ON WHO SHOULD BE IN
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CHARGE DURING AN INTERIM PERIOD IN RHODESIA. HE APPEARED TO SAY
THAT HIS DEMAND THAT THE FRONT BE IN CHARGE WAS A MAXIMUM
POSITION SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION DURING FUTURE DISCUSSIONS. HE
SAW A ROLE FOR A BRITISH GOVERNOR GENERAL DURING AN INTERIM
PERIOD, BUT WANTED DUTIES OF THIS BRITISH OFFICIAL DEFINED.
NKOMO ALSO WANTED TO INFORM THE USG OF HIS INTENDED VISIT TO THE
U.S. IN AUGUST. WE BELIEVE NKOMO, WITH SOME RELUCTANCE AND

PROBABLY NOT IN ENTIRELY GOOD FAITH, IS SEEKING TO CHANGE HIS NEGATIVE IMAGE RE THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE OUT OF CONCERN THAT THE U.S. AND BRITAIN MIGHT JUST POSSIBLY GIVE SUPPORT TO AN INTERNAL SOLUTION IN RHODESIA AND OUT OF RESPECT FOR KAUNDA WHO MAY HAVE LEANED ON HIM TO MODIFY HIS STANCE. END SUMMARY.

1. JULY 12 MORNING MEETING WITH NKOMO AT ZAMBIAN PRESIDENTIAL GUEST HOUSE LASTED APPROXIMATELY 40 MINUTES. NKOMO IMMEDIATELY GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS AND BROACHED THREE SUBJECTS, AID TO REFUGEES, THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE. AND NKOMO'S UPCOMING TRIP TO THE U.S. CONVERSATION ON REFUGEES WILL BE REPORTED IN SEPTEL, NKOMO STATEMENTS ON REMAINING TOPICS FOLLOW:

2. ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE: NKOMO SAID THAT FROM WHAT HE HAS BEEN READING IN PRESS ABOUT HIS TALKS WITH THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, HE DOESN'T RECOGNIZE WHAT HE SAID. THIS BOTHERED HIM BECAUSE WHAT IS SAID OUTSIDE THE TALKS MAY IN THE END CARRY UNDUE INFLUENCE AND FOR THAT REASON, A CLARIFICATION OF HIS POSITION WAS IN ORDER. WE TOLD HIM THAT AFTER HIS LAST MEETING WITH THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, HE HAD GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WASN'T INTERESTED IN FURTHER CONSULTATIONS AND THAT IS WHY AMBASSADOR LOW WAS INSTRUCTED TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON AFTER SALISBURY. NKOMO REPLIED THAT FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WERE NOT NECESSARY; INSTEAD, A MEETING BETWEEN THE "DECISION MAKING PEOPLE" SUCH AS OWEN WITH HIS EXPERTS AND NKOMO REPRESENTING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) WAS NEEDED.
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3. WE ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD CLARIFY HIS POSITION TO MAKE SURE THERE IS NO MISUNDERSTANDING. NKOMO WENT THROUGH HIS STANDARD ARGUMENTS, EXPLAINING THAT WHAT IS GOING ON IN ZIMBABWE NOW IS A "WAR SITUATION" WHICH CANNOT BE APPROACHED ON PURELY POLITICAL GROUNDS UNLIKE OTHER INSTANCES OF BRITISH DECOLONIZATION IN AFRICA. HE OUTLINED PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS AT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THEM. ALL WERE FAILURES, INCLUDING KISSINGER INITIATIVE WHICH NKOMO HAD TOLD KISSINGER WOULD NOT WORK BUT HE HAD AGREED TO GO TO GENEVA ANYWAY. NKOMO RECALLED STATING IN GENEVA THAT IF THE TALKS DID NOT SUCCEED, THE NATIONALISTS WOULD FIGHT TO THE END. SINCE THAT TIME, THOUSANDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE RESPONDED TO HIS CALL.

4. NKOMO SAID THE NEXT STEP SHOULD BE DISCUSSIONS TO REMOVE THE CAUSES OF WAR AND ON THE STRUCTURE OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THERE WILL BE AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, BUT WHAT POLITICAL STRUCTURE WILL BE INSTALLED AT THIS TIME? THE TWO VITAL AND CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ARE THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND THE LAW AND ORDER STRUCTURE ACCOMPANYING IT. NKOMO SAID HE WAS WILLING TO DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS. HE SAID IT IS NATURAL

THAT THE PF WOULD WANT ITS TROOPS IN CHARGE DURING AN INTERIM PERIOD. THE PF HAD BEEN FIGHTING FOR POWER AND POWER WAS WHAT WHO CONTROLLED AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WAS ALL ABOUT. HE SAID HE HAS BOTH GUERRILLAS AND REGULAR TROOPS INCLUDING POLICE AND CUSTOMS OFFICIALS AT HIS DISPOSAL. WE ASKED HIM IF HE WAS SAYING THAT DURING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT POLITICAL CONTROL MUST BE DIRECTED BY HIMSELF AND LAW AND ORDER GUARANTEED BY FORCES UNDER HIMSELF AS WELL?

NKOMO SAID THIS IS NOT HIS POSITION. HIS IDEA OF A POLITICAL STRUCTURE FOR THE INTERIM PERIOD AS SUBMITTED IN GENEVA AND GAVE THE PF A MAJORITY OF SEATS ON A PROPOSED COUNCIL. ON THE LAW AND ORDER SIDE, HE SAID "WE ARE THERE." IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUERY WHETHER HE WAS TALKING ABOUT COMPLETE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONTROL, NKOMO SAID, "LET'S DISCUSS IT WITH OWEN AND SEE HOW FAR WE GO." WE ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR PF FORCES TO BE UNDER THIRD PARTY COMMAND AND NKOMO SAID HE WAS NOT SURE AND REPEATED HIS WISH TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER. WE THEN NOTED REFERENCES TO NKOMO'S REJECTION OF A BRITISH GOVERNOR DURING AN INTERIM OR CARETAKER PERIOD. NKOMO DENIED EVER STATING HIS PROPOSALS IN NEGATIVE TERMS. HE RECALLED INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT OF A BRITISH PRESENCE IN RHODESIA AND SAID THE UK REFUSED. "NOW I UNDERSTAND THEY WANT TO GRAB EVERYTHING." NKOMO SAID HE HAD GAINED THIS IMPRESSION FROM GRAHAM AND MUSED THAT "THE BULLDOG WANTS TO GET OUR TEETH TO BITE US." NKOMO THEN SAID THAT THE AUTHORITY OF A BRITISH GOVERNOR GENERAL SHOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSIONS WITH DECISION MAKERS AND ADDED THAT THERE MUST BE A FORMAL MEETING WITH THOSE EMPOWERED TO MAKE DECISIONS.

5. NKOMO SAID HE WANTED TO ASSURE US THAT A CONSTITUTION FOR AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE WAS A MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN AND THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT DID NOT TAKE THE DRAFTING OF SUCH A DOCUMENT LIGHTLY. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLES ADVANCED BY THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP: UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS, A BILL OF RIGHTS AND INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY.

6. VISIT TO US: NKOMO IS PLANNING TO VISIT SOUTH AND THEN NORTH AMERICA. HE PLANS TO LEAVE LUSAKA JULY 21 FOR SOUTH AMERICA AND BE IN WASHINGTON FROM AUGUST 8-12 AND WOULD LIKE TO MEET THE SECRETARY, ASST SECY MOOSE, AND AMB YOUNG IF AVAILABLE. WE NOTED THAT SOME OF THE PEOPLE HE WANTS TO MEET MIGHT BE OUT OF TOWN BUT OFFERED OUR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING APPOINTMENTS. NKOMO SAID HE WOULD LEAVE THE MATTER IN OUR HANDS.

COMMENT: THERE WAS AN UNREAL QUALITY ABOUT NKOMO'S PRESENTA-
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TION. ON THE ONE HAND HE SEEMED TO BE CONFIRMING THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS INDEED DEMANDING THAT POWER BE TURNED OVER DIRECTLY BY SMITH TO IT. THIS CAME THROUGH CLEARLY IN HIS STATEMENT THAT POWER WAS WHAT THE STRUGGLE WAS ALL ABOUT AND THAT THIS IS THEREASON WHY THE FRONT MUST (AND HE CAME VERY CLOSE TO SAYING SO) CONTROL THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE WAS SAYING THAT THE FRONT WAS PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE STRUCTURE OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND WHERE THE FRONT MIGHT FIT IN. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT BOTH THE FORM OF THE BRITISH PRESENCE AND MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD ARE NEGOTIABLE QUESTIONS. WE SUSPECT THAT NKOMO'S DESIRE TO CLARIFY HIS POSITION IN THE DIRECTION OF BEING MORE ACCOMODATING IS MOTIVATED MORE BY TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAN BY A REAL CHANGE OF HEART. KAUNDA MAY WELL HAVE LEANED ON HIM TO PULL BACK FROM HIS NEGATIVE APPROACH TO THE INITIATIVE (THERE WAS A HINT OF THIS IN KAUNDA'S JULY 8 PRESS CONFERENCE). FURTHER, NKOMO MAY HAVE DECIDED THAT IT WAS IN HIS INTEREST NOT TO DISTANCE HIMSELF TOO FAR FROM THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE SINCE THEY JUST MIGHT BACK AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IF HE TORPEDOED THEIR EFFORT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, NATIONALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE164354
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO:MESWOPE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770252-0228
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770756/aaaabwpt.tel
Line Count: 197
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0e74566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 LUSAKA 1961, 77 STATE 160853
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1858194
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NKOMO SEEKS TO CLARIFY PATRIOTIC FRONT STAND ON ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK, (NKOMO, JOSHUA)
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0e74566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009